

Message Text

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ACTION STR-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 STRE-00 AGR-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00

COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FRB-03 H-02 INR-07 INT-05 L-03

LAB-04 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 AID-05 CIEP-01 SS-15

ITC-01 TRSE-00 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 FEAE-00 OMB-01

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P R 031549Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4655

INFO ALL EC CAPITALS 0171

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DEPT PASS AGRICULTURE AND STR

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, EC, FR, ECON

SUBJECT: POULTRY/COGNAC

REF: A) PARIS 24187; B) PARIS 23149

BEGIN SUMMARY: MINAG OFFICIALS OPTIMISTIC THAT SUPPLEMENTARY LEVIES WILL BE REDUCED AT SEPTEMBER 7 EC POULTRY MANAGEMENT MEETING AND HINT THAT SOME OTHER ACTION MIGHT BE TAKEN TO REDUCE TOTAL CHARGES. MINAG AGREES TO EXAMINE SCIENTIFIC BASIC FOR EXISTING SANITARY REGULATIONS TO DETERMINE IF TOLERANCE LEVEL CAN BE ESTABLISHED TO REPLACE CURRENT ABSOLUTE PROHIBITION. WILL ALSO EXPLORE POSSIBILITY OF MAKING EXCEPTION IN REGULATIONS TO ALLOW IMPORTATION OF POULTRY IF FEED ADDITIVES IN QUESTION NOT USED CERTAIN NUMBER OF DAYS PRIOR TO SLAUGHTER. GOF WOULD BE RECEPTIVE TO MEETING OF USDA AND MINAG SCIENTISTS TO EXPLORE TECHNICAL POSSIBILITIES.

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END SUMMARY.

1. IN RESPONSE TO AUGUST 19 LETTER TO AUBERGER (REF. A, PARA.2), WHO JUST RETURNED FROM VACATION SEPTEMBER 1, MEETING WAS HELD WITH MINAG OFFICIALS REVEL AND PECHBERTY (REVEL ASSISTANT RESPONSIBLE FOR USA) AND AGATT OFFICERS TO REVIEW GOF PROGRESS AND PROPOSALS, ESPECIALLY AT THE SEPTEMBER 7 EC POULTRY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING. ALSO, EFFECTS OF DROUGHT AND POSSIBLE US/FRENCH COOPERATION WERE DISCUSSED (REPORTED SEPTTEL).

2. REVEL EMPHASIZED GOF PLANS FOR ACTION AT SEPTEMBER 7 MEETING AND ATTEMPTED TO DOWNPLAY PROSPECTS FOR CHANGE IN GOF SANITARY REGULATIONS. REVEL INDICATED GOF WOULD AGAIN ENDEAVOR TO REDUCE SUPPLEMENTARY LEVIES, AND ESPECIALLY ON TURKEY PARTS. AGATT STATED THIS ACTION WAS IN RIGHT DIRECTION, BUT USG CONCERN IS REDUCTION OVERALL LEVEL OF PROTECTION. REVEL PRODUCED FAS CIRCULAR SHOWING THAT EC PROTECTION ON TURKEY DRUMSTICKS WAS "ONLY" 88 PERCENT ON AN AD VALOREM BASIS AND THAT THE SUPPLEMENTARY LEVY ACCOUNTED FOR ABOUT 2/3 OF TOTAL CHARGES. AGATT COUNTERED THAT VARIABLE LEVY CHANGES HAD MORE THAN OFFSET SUPPLEMENTARY LEVIES SINCE PROTECTION FOR THIS ITEM WAS ONLY ABOUT 10 PERCENT TWO YEARS AGO, AND THAT US FARM GROUPS ONLY CONCERNED ABOUT TOTAL LEVEL OF PROTECTION. REVEL CONCEDED THAT SHARP INCREASE IN LEVEL OF EC PROTECTION ON POULTRY IN PAST TWO YEARS WAS JUSTIFIABLE REASON FOR US CONCERN, AND HE HINTED THAT SOME CONSIDERATION WAS BEING GIVEN TO REDUCING OVERALL LEVIES. HOWEVER, THIS ACTION WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE AT THE SEPTEMBER 7 MEETING WHICH IS RESPONSIBLE ONLY FOR SUPPLEMENTAL LEVIES.

3. AS EXAMPLE OF DIFFICULTIES FACING FRENCH IN BRUSSELS, REVEL REFERRED TO LARDINOIS' SPEECH AT NSPA CONVENTION, MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA IN WHICH HE ACCUSED US OF UNILATERALLY REOPENING THE CHICKEN WAR. THUS ANY FAVORABLE ACTION IN BRUSSELS MUST INVOLVE MAJOR SALES EFFORT WITH LARDINOIS OR HEMAY REVIVE EFFORTS ON VEGETABLE OIL TAX, ETC.

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4. REVEL WAS INITIALLY PESSIMISTIC ABOUT POSSIBLE CHANGES IN GOF SANITARY REGULATIONS. HOWEVER, AGATT EMPHASIZED THAT PROGRESS IN THIS AREA WAS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT POLITICALLY BECAUSE US FARM GROUPS CONSIDER THIS A BLATENT TRADE BARRIER, ESPECIALLY SINCE POULTRY LIVERS ARE EXEMPT FROM THE BAN, AND IT IS THE ONE AREA UNDER EXCLUSIVE FRENCH CONTROL. REVEL ACKNOWLEDGED THE POLITICAL SENSITIVITY AND AGATT SUGGESTED THAT MINAG RE-EXAMINE

SCIENTIFIC BASIS FOR CURRENT REGULATIONS WITH OBJECTIVE OF POSSIBLY ESTABLISHING A TOLERANCE LEVEL INSTEAD OF AN ABSOLUTE BAN. REVEL WAS DOUBTFUL THAT AYFFSRANCE LEPFL WOULD BE POSSIBLE SINCE THE FEED ADDITIVES ARE METABOLIZED AND MAY NOT BE DETECTABLE, BUT AGREED TO ASK MINAG SCIENTISTS TO EXAMINE POSSIBILITIES. WE THEN DISCUSSED DES PROBLEM THAT REVEL WAS AWARE OF WHEN SERVING IN FRENCH EMBASSY IN DC. WE RECALLED THAT AT ONE POINT DURING DES ISSUE, IT WAS SHOWN THAT DES DID NOT AFFECT

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BEEF IF ITS USAGE STOPPED 10 OR 15 DAYS PRIOR TO SLAUGHTER. WE SUGGESTED THAT PERHAPS SAME WAS POSSIBLE WITH RESPECT TO FEED ADDITIVES IN QUESTION. REVEL THOUGHT THE IDEA WAS AN INTERESTING ONE AND ASKED IF IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR US TO CERTIFY THAT THESE ADDITIVES WERE NOT USED FOR A SPECIFIED NUMBER OF DAYS PRIOR TO SLAUGHTER. WE AGREED TO EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES WITH

USDA/W, AND REVEL AGREED TO SEE IF GOF SANITARY REGULATIONS COULD BE CHANGED ACCORDINGLY. IN VIEW OF COMPLICATED TECHNICAL NATURE OF SANITARY REQUIREMENTS, REVEL SUGGESTED THAT A MEETING OF USDA AND MINAG SCIENTISTS WOULD SEEM TO BE IN ORDER. WE AGREED TO CHECK ON THIS POSSIBILITY AND ADVISE.

5. NEAR END OF MEETING REVEL STATED THAT POSTPONEMENT OF HEARINGS TO SEPTEMBER 20 WAS A "MIXED BLESSING"--THE ADDITIONAL TIME WAS HELPFUL, BUT OTHER GOF AGENCIES HAVE "DUMPED" THIS PROBLEM IN MINAG'S LAP WHILE THEY CONCERNED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TRATE ON OTHER ISSUES.

COMMENT: PRESSURE CLEARLY ON MINAG TO RESOLVE THIS ISSUE WITHIN AN AGRICULTURAL CONTEXT TO MINIMIZE ADVERSE EFFECTS ON OVERALL US/FRENCH RELATIONS (REF B). FRENCH SUCCESS IN BRUSSELS WOULD BE GREATLY ASSISTED IF LARDINOIS CAN BE CONVINCED OF IMPORTANCE OF RESOLVING THIS ISSUE AND IF OTHER EC COUNTRIES DESIRING REDUCED FOOD PRICES CAN TAKE MORE INITIATIVE AT THE SEPTEMBER 7 MEETING. ALSO, INCLUSION OF POULTRY AMONG SECTORS TO BE COMPENSATED FOR "DROUGHT LOSSES" AT SPECIAL EC AGRICULTURAL MINISTERS' MEETING SEPTEMBER 9 WOULD MAKE REDUCTIONS IN LEVELS OF PROTECTION EASIER TO ACCEPT. MINAG SEEMS GENUINELY CONCERNED WITH FINDING A WAY TO CHANGE THE SANITARY REGULATIONS THAT WILL NOT OVERLY EXCITE DOMESTIC POULTRY INTERESTS. WE FEEL THAT A MEETING OF USDA AND MINAG SCIENTISTS, WHILE ADMITTEDLY TIME-CONSUMING, IS A POSSIBILITY WE SHOULD GIVE DUE CONSIDERATION. PLEASE ADVISE AS TO POSSIBILITIES IN THIS AREA.
RUSH

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